



THE
TRAN *Script*




A celebration of
3 BAPTISM



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: RAISING A FOLLOWER OF JESUS * WHEN SHOULD WE CELEBRATE BAPTISM?
OUTSIDE THE CHURCH WALLS * THE VALUE OF A WELCOME * UPCOMING EVENTS AND SERVICES

Risking
CHANGE

2

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Church of the
Transfiguration

Risking Change

Change has been a constant in our community over the last number of years, from the new ways we celebrate on Sundays to the priorities we find evident in our budget.

As a Christian community we embrace change, not for the sake of change itself, but in search of new opportunities for people to come into relationship with Jesus Christ. But for those of us who have become accustomed to life being a certain way, change can often be the source of anguish and heartache.

I have heard the claim many times, from many a wise person, that we all fear change. But through the changes that we have experienced as a community in recent years, I have come to believe that we do not actually fear 'change' itself, but instead fear (and grieve) the 'loss' that is so often tied to change.

We get comfortable with the way things are. We come to depend on certain things being certain ways. And when something is going to be altered and change, our inclination can be to resist it, because we don't want to experience the loss and the grief that might come with the change.

But as the people of God, as Christ's Church in God's world, we are a people who listen for our vocational call – we are a people who are open to being led by the Spirit as we move forward in the direction of God.

There is a story in the Gospel of John about a man named Nicodemus who emerges from the darkness of the night to seek answers from this new Rabbi, named Jesus. When he asks Jesus how he might enter into the Kingdom of God, Jesus tells this Jewish leader that no one can without first having been born again from above. In Jesus' answer, Nicodemus is invited to outwardly

and inwardly, publicly and privately seek an intentional change. However, this seems to be too much for this Pharisee to handle, so Nicodemus questions Jesus on what it really means to enter into such a change.

As every disciple is called to do, we must dig deep as individuals and as a community, to discover ways in which God is calling us to change; working to create an environment and a culture for others to learn of the gospel, to be baptized, and to come to faith. We open our hearts and our minds as God's anointed people; we transfigure our worship and our community as the needs present themselves; so that when others are ready and when God's time is right, those who walk through our doors and into our lives might come to recognize Jesus here.

God has made the Church to be something special – he has made the Church to be Christ's hands and Christ's feet in God's world. God has made Transfiguration to be something special – he has made us to be the embodiment of the Gospel for those wish to come to know our Lord.

In this season of Advent, we heed the call of the prophet in the wilderness as we go out to prepare His ways, and we work to open up His paths, so that others might come, taste and see. We gather around the table to receive the Eucharist each week, asking God to give us the courage, the commitment and the faith to risk becoming the sacrament of invitation and life for all those who come and seek. ✚

David+

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RAISING A FOLLOWER OF JESUS

By Giselle Clarke-Trenaman

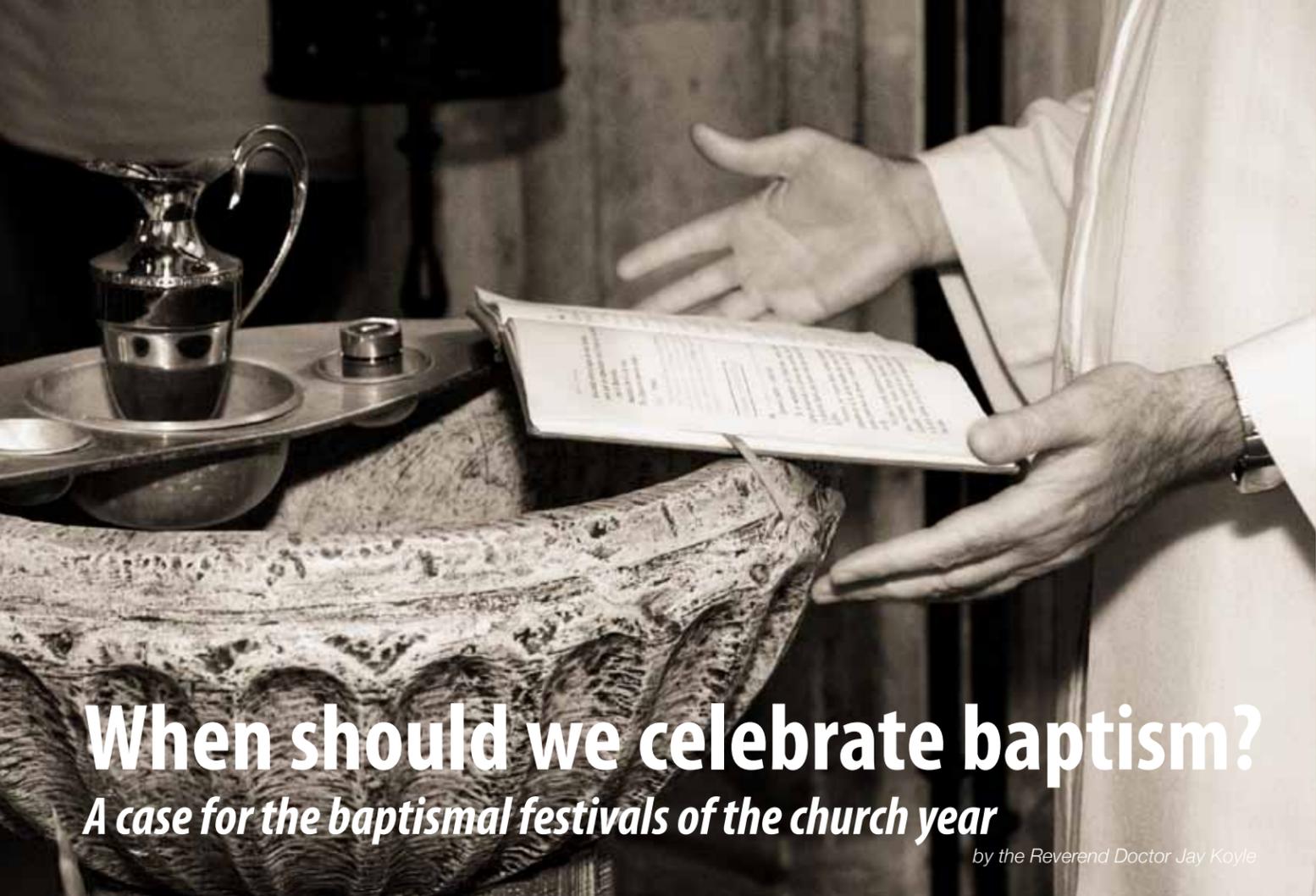
When I mentioned to a friend of mine that I wouldn't be getting Brianna's ears pierced until her Baptism, they replied, "Oh, you're going to do that?" For a moment I was confused – did they mean the piercing or the Baptism?

Growing up in an English/Barbadian home, God was a major influence in my childhood. Each day before supper we said Grace and before pulling out into traffic my mother would mutter under her breath "In God I trust, may You go before me." I learned the Lord's Prayer and went to sleep with a picture of Jesus above my bed. Knowing that there was a higher power that looked over us gave me comfort and I want that for Brianna. As a child I didn't understand everything that was said at church but I saw how calm my parents were, how Sunday worship was a special time in the week that we were a family, and how focused we were on something other than our day-to-day needs and wants.

When Brianna was born, one of the first phone calls I made was to Father David, because we wanted our Christian faith to be a part of her life from the beginning. Brad and I have grown busier over the years and the Church reconnects us after a hectic week. We are calm there, we are a family there, we are focused on others and on Jesus there. When we expressed our desire to have Brianna baptized, Father David gave us the book "What's So Amazing About Grace" to read. We jumped in with both feet and it gave us so many moments to pause and think. By having Brianna baptized we were not only placing her in God's hands, but were also tasking ourselves and her Godparents to keep her on the path that Jesus walked. Growing up in Canada in the 21st century, Brianna will encounter many different situations and will have many different questions. Hopefully with God's help, and our Christian community, we shall be able to answer her truthfully and with grace.

A few weeks ago I dropped her off at Sunday school for the first time. As I laid out her play mat and the girls came running over to greet her, a tear came to my eye, as I thought, "This is her first day at Sunday School. She's going to have a blast!" It is her time to be with others, to learn that she isn't the only one, to come to know more fully that God loves her no matter what. At night I have tasked myself to read her a story from her Bible and to pray with her. When she is older I would like for her to volunteer, and to be an active member of the Church. We say Grace before supper and before I pull into traffic I say "In God I trust, may You go before me." Brianna sleeps under the same picture of Jesus as I did.

My prayer for her is that she might become an open, honest and graceful follower of Jesus; growing up in this world, full of temptation, dishonesty and distraction, prepared with the knowledge that God will always love her and is there for her no matter what life brings her way. ✚



When should we celebrate baptism?

A case for the baptismal festivals of the church year

by the Reverend Doctor Jay Koyle

A good number of you likely remember a time, not so long ago, when parents simply phoned the church and booked a date for the baptism of their newborn. For the most part, such occasions were scheduled to serve the convenience of visiting relatives. Other times these arrangements were made to ensure the baby “got done” as soon as possible after birth. Now, however, many clergy and other church leaders are insisting (or at least encouraging) a “new” practice: that baptisms take place on particular days of the church year. Why the change?

The timing of baptism shapes our understanding of baptism

Baptism is the foundational sacrament of the church. Yet, for many years – centuries, actually – baptism was treated as something belonging largely to the rhythms of personal or familial life. Thus, the meanings of baptism that were emphasized concerned the individual benefits of the sacrament, such as “eternal salvation” or the “washing away of sin.” As a result, what was essentially the practice of “emergency baptism” became the norm. The timing of baptism re-

flected and reinforced these understandings.

However, other meanings, all of which were prominent in the early church, have been rising to the fore once again in recent decades. No longer understood in individual terms alone, today’s church is beginning to see how baptism belongs to an ongoing process of transformation for the whole faith community. The fundamental connection of baptism to Christian mission and ministry is receiving renewed attention, too. Indeed, there is a growing rediscovery of the church as an alternative community formed to bear witness to life according to the near and promised Kingdom of God.

What has prompted these important shifts in emphasis? The church is no longer esteemed as central to the dominant society, tasked with contributing to its stability. Instead, we find ourselves coming to terms with a new and nearby mission frontier, one where transformation is the clear need of the day. As a result, it has become necessary, as my colleague Dan Benedict puts it, for us to send down “...new and deeper roots into the bedrock of Christian tradition.” In these initial layers of tradition we find robust baptismal practices that once

shaped a church of vibrant discipleship and effective missional engagement in the world. Among these practices is the deliberate way in which the church’s ordering of time reflected and reinforced their understandings of baptism.

Today, we know that our personal calendars – how we allocate our time – both reflect and reinforce what really matters to us. Thus, many of us are deliberate about how we organize those calendars. Well, if we are to be shaped in the kind of baptismal understandings that promoted vitality amongst the first Christians, we need to set our congregational calendar to reflect and reinforce such understandings.

Observing the baptismal festivals

Already, the rhythms of baptismal celebration drive the design of the church year and its lectionary. Each liturgical season is fashioned to highlight various facets of the baptismal life. Moreover, these seasons find their starting point and/or climax in particular baptismal feasts.

The Great Vigil of Easter is lifted up as the preeminent occasion for celebrating baptism,

especially for adults and older children. It is at this time that the calendar and lectionary converge in a most profound way on the central mystery of our faith: “Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.” This is the time of year when it becomes most apparent that baptism immerses us into the death and rising of the Lord. “Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” Therefore, it is strongly recommended that adult baptisms, except for urgent need, are reserved for this observance alone.

Of course, other days are available for the celebration of baptism, especially when the candidate is an infant or young child. The Day of Pentecost emphasizes the bestowal of the Holy Spirit and that Spirit’s gifts in baptism, the baptismal fellowship in the Spirit that transcends divisions, and the universal witness to the good news prompted by the Spirit.

All Saints’ Day (or the Sunday following) emphasizes the Communion of Saints across all times and places, something in which all the baptized share. This feast also gives expression to the promise of a world in which all nations

will be gathered at the great banquet table set by God, acknowledging that it is the church’s vocation to be a sign and foretaste of this promise.

The Baptism of the Lord reveals our share in the mission and ministry of Christ through baptism, recognizing us as beloved and anointed daughters and sons of God. If you are blessed with an abundance of baptisms too numerous for the above mentioned festivals, there are other days (or the Sunday following them) that readily suggest themselves for baptisms. One is your congregation’s festival day, the Transfiguration of the Lord (August 6). Holy Cross Day (September 14) or one of the Sundays during the fifty-day season of Easter are suitable occasions, too. Unless she/he visits in Advent or Lent, Sundays on which the Bishop is present are wonderful times to celebrate baptism.

If the preferred days for baptism come along and there are no candidates, you can still observe them as true baptismal festivals. Include the renewal of baptismal vows in the service. Make sure there is the same level of jubilant music and lavish use of symbols as in your celebrations of baptism. Mark the anniversaries of

those in your congregation who were baptized in previous years on or following the particular feast day you are observing. In fact, treat the whole day (not just the morning) as a celebration! Hold a barbeque or banquet. Provide intergenerational activities in the afternoon that focus on baptism in light of the particular feast day. Perhaps even offer special events in the evening as a gift to the wider community.

Reflecting and reinforcing baptism’s priority

Observing the preferred baptismal festivals anchors the understanding and appreciation of baptism in the rhythms of a congregation’s life. Over time, I believe you will find that marking them awakens your congregation’s enthusiasm for vigorous baptismal practice. In short, their observance will reflect and reinforce priority upon baptism and the way of vibrant discipleship. ❖

The Rev. Dr. Jay Koyle is Congregational Development Officer for the Diocese of Algoma, and Director of Table Song: Eighth Day Perspectives. In May of this year, he was our guest preacher and the leader of a visioning evening with our Parish Council.



Join us as we welcome
Benjamin Quinn & Charlotte Seymour
 into God’s family on
 Sunday November 25th.

≈ Benjamin, with Audrey, Chris and Laura
 « Charlotte, with Julie and Jethro

Episcopal Visit from
 Archbishop Colin Johnson
RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS
 Sunday December 16th

»IN VINO VERITAS«
SCRIPTURE STUDY

WELCOME!
 Join us the **second Tuesday** of every month at 7 pm for wine, conversation, reflection, and the chance to dig deeper into God’s Word.

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH WALLS;

Reflection on ministry beyond our community

by the Reverend Deacon Luigi Licari

We, the Church, are the Body of the Risen Christ in the world today. As such, it is incumbent upon us to continue the work begun by Jesus before He was crucified. The Risen Christ has returned to God and is now hidden within the Transcendence of God. We, Christ's Body on earth, the Immanent Body, continue the work given us to do in this world.

the issue of fault: just as God awards grace to us freely, steeped in unworthiness though we are, are we in a safe place by judging the worthiness of others to receive what we have to share? We should not consider "there but by the grace of God go I"; rather, because of God's grace I go to help. And that's just in our own neighborhoods. Consider the amount of work we have to do in the whole of the interconnected world, and what peace might look like when we learn to share more and better.

Lord, when did we see you a stranger and invite you in?

In this place we are very welcoming. This is a safe, warm, welcoming place. We gather here to celebrate the Risen Lord in our midst, to receive what we need to welcome, to be welcomed, to become family. We just celebrated a fantastic season with "Back to Church Sunday". Why not get on with bringing more people into our midst on a regular basis; to welcome them to the family, to celebrate who they are, to enjoy the diversity God gives us as a rainbow in the heavens, so that all of us together can get on with welcoming others and then others, and then more after that?

Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of these...you did for me.

I think you begin to get the picture of where I am going with this. As we thank God for gathering us from among all nations and peoples to be the Body of the Risen Christ at work in the world today, we can begin to understand where that work will lead us. These are but examples given in a story. Don't read them so literally as to think there isn't so much more, so much different, in our world today for us to be

concerned about. This is especially true as we begin to consider our time, our treasure, what God has given us to share. As I ask myself what God has given me to use, I consider the grace of my ordination a great gift that imparts sacramental talents to me. But as with all things, it is not given to me for myself. Rather, I am obliged, by having received and accepted, to use what I have for the good of all. My catholic faith leads me to this position. And so I ask you to consider what

talents God has given each of you, to inventory them if you will, and let us together, as a family, decide how we as this Body of Christ in this area of Toronto may put them to the best use for building up the whole of God's Church. ✚

We should not consider "there but by the grace of God go I"; rather, "because of God's grace I go to help".



What that work should be is summed up in one of the stories of the Last Judgement as described in the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 25: 31-46). I would suggest we start there to understand what we need to be doing as the duly appointed representatives of Christ continuing the work begun by Jesus during His life amongst us.

Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you?

In developed countries, in the midst of plenty, yes, plenty even in a financial slow-down or crisis, many go hungry. The reasons are many: children by no fault of their own, those addicted because of disease, the down and out maybe temporarily, the elderly and others on fixed income due to rising prices. But let's return to



CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

by Thomas Gonder

Greetings, friends!

What a glorious sound coming from the choir stalls! Since its inception, the Congregational Chorus has really taken off and added fresh energy to our music programme. I take great delight in being part of such a dynamic, growing and vibrant parish and our music programme reflects that Spirit-filled witness. I want to thank all of you for your time, talent and effort in making this a success!

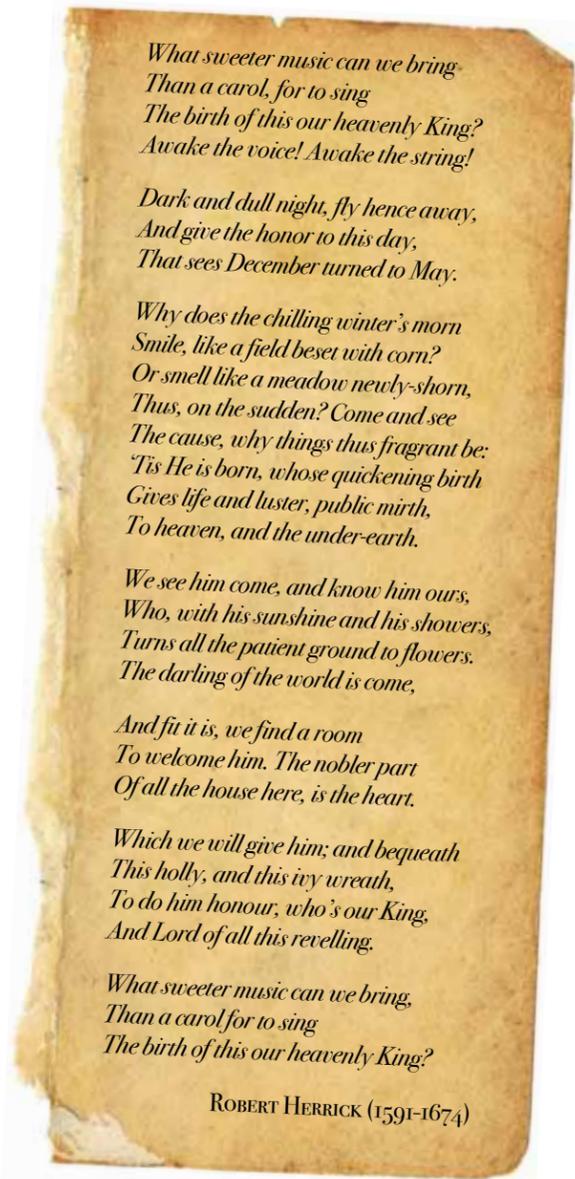
Some of you have taken part in singing Psalms and Communion Anthems in various configurations, either as a small group, as a duet, or as a soloist. I have heard nothing but high praise for the gifts you've shared. We have been very successful in deepening the way in which we share the Gospel through music. Let's increase our momentum, maintain it, and take it into 2013 and beyond.

Christmas Eve Chorus

I wish to encourage as many of you as I can to consider your participation during the Advent/Christmas season. Many people have family commitments, but I implore you to give of your time and talent most especially on Christmas Eve and the following Sunday for Lessons and Carols! We will have an increased amount of music to attend to!

I will hold Choir Practice on Christmas Eve from 9 pm until 10 pm. This provides a break before the Carol Sing at 10:15 and the service at 10:30. The music will be glorious! Also, I'd like to schedule a rehearsal on Thursday, December 20th, time TBA. I will speak with you to find the most suitable time so that we can cover extra music for Lessons and Carols. It is my hope that you are as excited as I am, and pleased with the progress we have made thus far!

Thank you all again, and I close by offering you these words of inspiration by Robert Herrick:



*What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!*

*Dark and dull night, fly hence away,
And give the honor to this day,
That sees December turned to May.*

*Why does the chilling winter's morn
Smile, like a field beset with corn?
Or smell like a meadow newly-shorn,
Thus, on the sudden? Come and see
The cause, why things thus fragrant be:
'Tis He is born, whose quickening birth
Gives life and luster, public mirth,
To heaven, and the under-earth.*

*We see him come, and know him ours,
Who, with his sunshine and his showers,
Turns all the patient ground to flowers.
The darling of the world is come,*

*And fit it is, we find a room
To welcome him. The nobler part
Of all the house here, is the heart.*

*Which we will give him; and bequeath
This holly, and this ivy wreath,
To do him honour, who's our King,
And Lord of all this revelling.*

*What sweeter music can we bring,
Than a carol for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?*

ROBERT HERRICK (1591-1634)

ADULT CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Confirmation?
Reception?
Reaffirmation?

Join us every Wednesday evening at 6:30 pm from November 14th to December 12th.

Questions?
Talk to Father David.



Caroling in the Community

Wednesday December 19th
More details to follow...

CHRISTMAS LESSONS & CAROLS SERVICE

Sunday December 30th
Lunch to follow



“Many people who have come to Transfiguration have said that the reason they returned is that they felt so welcomed”

The value of a WELCOME

by Tanja Futter

For those of us who have been part of Church of the Transfiguration for a long time, we can forget how scary it can be to walk into a new church - how intimidating it can be to be an “outsider” coming into an already formed community, and the fears of what people will think of one’s clothing, speech, or understanding of faith. But something that can calm some of those fears can be the simple act of welcoming someone in an authentic way into our community.

When I lived in Kenya, I had many different experiences entering into new churches as I sought to find a church “home”. One Sunday morning, on my quest to find the right church, I went into a church in my neighbourhood that I had passed by a few times. I was nervous, as it was the first time that I had gone to a church alone, and I knew already that the expression of faith in Kenya was different than my own. When I went in, I was given a bulletin and asked to wear a name tag because I was new; during the service I was asked to stand up and introduce myself to the congregation; and after the service, I stayed for a few moments and although people looked at me from afar, no-one came to greet me. I was intimidated, I was nervous, and I felt like I was in a spotlight. I never went back. But I learned a lesson that day - I learned the importance of welcoming people in a way that honoured them as individuals.

Many people who have come to Transfiguration have said that the reason they returned is that they felt so welcomed. They were greeted by someone at the door, and spoken to by parishioners before or after the service. They had people come up and speak to them and ask them questions, inquiring about them in a way that wasn’t inquisition-like. They were invited in to worship, just as they were, and they were welcomed to come again and become part of a community. And when they returned, their return was often acknowledged by someone.

There are many references in scripture about the importance of welcoming strangers into communities and churches. Matthew 25 says that as we welcome a stranger, we are welcoming the Lord. It says, “...I was a stranger and you invited me in” and then later in the chapter, “whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:35,40) This is a humbling way to look at how we welcome people. As we strive as a church to welcome people in authentic ways, we should remember that we are inviting Jesus to come and worship with us. ✚



CELEBRATE THE CHRISTMAS SEASON WITH US!



Saturday, December 15th



4:00pm

Blue Christmas Service

Monday, December 24th (Christmas Eve)



4:00pm

Children’s Christmas Service

10:15pm

Christmas Carols

10:30pm

Midnight Mass

Sunday, December 30th



10:30am

**A Service of Lessons
and Carols for Christmas**